

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This study is about "Role of Pair-work Technique in Developing Reading Comprehension" in grade nine. Introduction consists of general background, English language teaching: importance and a brief history, techniques in language classroom, action research, teaching of reading skill, testing of reading skill, literature review, objectives and significance of the study.

### **1.1 General Background**

In terms of language spoken in the society, most of the societies of the world are multilingual or bilingual. It has been estimated that some sixty percent of today's world population is multilingual. In this concern, Richards and Rodgers (2001, p.3) say, "From both contemporary and a historical perspective bilingualism and multilingualism is a norm rather than the exception". So, language teaching and learning have become the integral part of our life in the present world.

Language teaching was not regarded as separate profession before twentieth century. In this concern, Richards and Rodgers (2001, p.1) view, "Language teaching came into its own as a profession in the twentieth century". Therefore, the fundamental development of contemporary language teaching took place in the early part of twentieth century, as applied linguists and others sought for the development of principles and procedures for the design of teaching methods and materials. In this concern, (ibid, p.1) say, "Language teaching in the 20th century was characterized by frequent changes and innovation and by the development of sometimes competing language teaching ideologies."

Before 13th century the teaching and learning of classical languages e.g. Greek and Latin were confined to the analysis of grammar translation works and rhetoric. In other words, at that time Greek and Latin languages were taught by applying

grammar translation (GT) method. In 16th century, modern languages like English, French and Italian gained importance as a result of political changes in Europe and they entered in the curriculum of European school in eighteenth century. But these modern languages (French, Italian and English) were also taught by applying the same method as the classical languages were taught i.e. applying grammar translation method. Despite the fact that grammar translation method was considered to be a method without any theoretical foundation, it dominated foreign language teaching from 1840s to 1940s and it in its modified form is still popular method in some countries especially the developing countries like Nepal. Though the GT method enjoyed more than 100 years popularity in the field of foreign language teaching, it began losing its popularity along with the development of other new methods and approaches. Since the GT method puts much emphasis on reading and writing skills, students became unable to communicate through foreign language. In the same line, Larsen-Freeman (2000, p. 11) says "Earlier in this century, this method was used for the purpose of helping students read and appreciate foreign language literature." Therefore, in the mid and late 19<sup>th</sup> century, it was opposed and rejected owing to ignoring the developing of oral proficiency in the learners. In this regard, Karn (2007) writes:

Realizing the need for communication and oral proficiency in the language learners, some individual language teaching specialists developed new approaches. One of them was French man C. Marcel (1793-1896) who referred to child language learning as a model for teaching. Similarly, the English man T. Prendergast (1806-1886) argued that learners should be taught the most basic structural patterns. Moreover, Frenchman F. Gouin (1831-1896) developed approach to teaching a foreign language based on his observation of his children's use of languages" (p. 61).

Now, the job of language teaching has got its professional recognition and several new language teaching approaches and methodology have been developed. The first major paradigm in the modern language teaching was the adaptation of grammar based method which came to be known as the structural approach in the United Kingdom and Audiolingualism in the United States. Audiolingual method became popular between 1950s and 1960s. However, it was surpassed by communicative approach later. During the same period other method attracted smaller but equally enthusiastic followers including Silent way, Natural Approach, Total Physical Response, and in 1990s, Content based Instruction and Task-Based Language Teaching emerged. It has become so interesting that approximately, every decade a new approach or methodology comes into vogue and all the methods had their heydays. Brown (1994, p. 14) states on the changing EFL paradigm, "as schools of thought have come and gone, so have language teaching methods waxed and waned in popularity."

### **1.1.1 English Language: Importance and a Brief History**

Now a days, English has become a genuine lingua franca; that is a language used widely for communication between people who do not share the same language. English enjoyed the status of international language as the status of classical Latin and Greek diminished from that of a living to that of "occasional" subject in the school curriculum the study of Latin took on a different function. Richards and Rodgers (2002, p. 3) say, "The study of classical Latin (the Latin on which the classical works of Virgil, Ovid, and Cicero were written) and an analysis of grammar and rhetoric became the model for language teaching." As Latin and Greek language lost their status, English became one of the most important international languages of the world. In this regard, Harmer (2008) argues:

Just as in the middle ages Latin became for a time a language of international communication (at least in the Roman empire), so English is

now commonly used in exchanges between, say, Japanese and Argentinean business people, or between Singaporeans and their Vietnamese counterpart (p. 13).

English is one of the six official languages of the UN and plays a vital role in international communication. Nearly half the worlds' books of science and technology are written in English language. If we look at the media, we can find out that over fifty percent of the worlds' newspaper or Radio stations use English as a medium of communication. Therefore, it has become a genuine lingua franca that is a language widely used for communication between people who do not share the same language. Burchfield (1985) also argues:

English has also become a lingua franca to the point that any literate, educated person is in a very real sense deprived if he does not know English. Poverty, famine and disease are instantly recognized as the cruelest and least excusable forms of deprivation. Linguistic deprivation is a less easily noticed condition, but one nevertheless of great significance (as cited in Phillipson 1992, p.5).

There is no doubt, that English is, and will remain a vital linguistic tool for many business people, academics, tourist and citizens of the world who wish to communicate easily across nationalities. According to Kachru (1983) "one might hazard a linguistic guess here. If the spread of English continues at the current rate, by the two thousand its non-native speakers will outnumber its native speakers" (as cited in Harmer 2001, p.13). From this saying we can envision that the English language has occupied prestigious status in the present day world.

The importance of English in the present world is being increased and Nepal cannot be the exception to it. The spread of English is as significant in its way as is the modern use of computers. When the amount of information need to be processed come to increase human capabilities the computer appeared in the scene, transforming the process of planning. Therefore, in Nepal also English is used as the medium of instruction in the classroom particularly in private institutions and it has been included in the curriculum as a compulsory subject from grade one to bachelor level.

The world wide spread of the significance of the English language has developed the sense of linguistic imperialism; the usual dominance of one language over other languages in the multilingual speech situations. The contemporary world is characterized by English linguistic imperialism. In this concern, Phillipson (Phillipson, 1992, p. 47) says, "English linguistic imperialism is that the dominance of English is asserted and maintained by the established and continuous reconstructions of structural and cultural inequalities between English and other languages." From the above mentioned arguments, we can claim that English language teaching and learning have become the basic requirement to be alive in the present day world.

### **1.1.2 Techniques in Language Classroom**

In the field of language teaching, the term 'Approach', 'Method', 'Procedures', and 'Technique' are frequently heard words. Technique is a particular trick which a teacher actually implements in the classroom to achieve the immediate objectives of the classroom. In other words, it is a particular trick or a wide variety of exercises, activities or devices used in the language classroom realize lesson objectives. Anthony (1963) defines the term technique as:

A technique is implementation that which actually takes place in the classroom. It is particular trick, stratagem, or contrivance use to accomplish

and immediate objective. Technique must be consistent with a method and therefore in Harmony with approach as well. It is the level at which classroom procedures are desired (as cited in Richard and Rodgers 2001, p.19).

From the above mentioned arguments, we can conclude that technique is actually applied in classroom while teaching-learning activities are going on. The appropriate technique is determined on the basis of the subject matter, teachers' individual artistry, composition of class, availability of teaching materials and so on.

On the basis of role played by the learners and teachers in the class room, there are two types of techniques namely student centered technique and teachers centered technique.

#### **1.1.2.1 Teacher Centered Technique**

As its name suggests it is the technique in which the teacher plays a vital or important role. Moreover, while applying this technique in the language classroom, the teacher has to be much more active than the students; that is the students' active participation in teaching learning activity is less or not focused. The teacher does each and every thing and the students become only the passively listeners. The commonly used teacher centered techniques are:

- Lecture
- Explanation
- Illustration
- Demonstration

### **1.1.2.2. Learner Centered Techniques**

This is another type of technique which emphasizes the role of students and his or her individual characteristics as central in classroom instruction instead of focusing on subject matter, external authority, and educational requirements. Therefore, it is more psychological than logical. Moreover, it emphasizes the process rather than the products. While applying learner centered technique, the teacher functions as a facilitator or a guide and the learners learn by doing themselves. Some of the learner centered techniques are given below:

- Individualization technique
- Group work
- Strip Story
- Drama
- Role Play
- Discovery Technique
- Pair-work
- Simulation

### **Pair-work Technique in Language Classroom**

This is one the important learner- centered techniques. As it is one of the learner-centered techniques, while applying this technique in language classroom, it is the learner who plays vital or active role and the role of teacher is only to facilitate or to guide the learners. It is often used in communicative classroom. Cross (1992, p.14) says, "It's a management task for developing communication ability." Pair work makes the students engage in interaction to each other. During pair work teacher has specially, two roles, a monitor and a resource person. As a monitor, he/she listen to the pairs, points out errors which are serious and he/she provides help, information and feedback upon request as resource persons. According to Harmer (2008, p. 165), "In pair work student can practice language together, study

a text, research language or take part in information gap activities. They can write dialogues predict the content of reading texts or compare notes on word they have listen to or seen."

Harmer (2008) has mentioned the following advantages and disadvantage of pair work technique:

Advantages:

- It dramatically increases the amount of speaking time any one student gets in the class.
- It allows students to work and interact independently without the necessary guidance of the teacher, thus previously learner independence.
- It allows teachers time to work with one or two pairs while the students continue working.
- It recognizes the old maxim that 'two heads are better than one' and in promoting cooperation, helps the classroom to become more relaxed and friendly less. If we get students to make decisions in pairs (such as deciding on the correct answers to questions about a reading text), we allow them to share responsibility, rather than hearing to bear the whole weight themselves.
- It is relatively quick and easy to organize.

Disadvantages

- Pair-work is frequently very not easy and some teachers and students dislike this. Teachers in particular worry that they will lose control of their class.
- Students in pair often veer away from the point of an exercise, talking about something else completely, often in their mother tongue. The chances of miss behavior are greater with pair work then in whole class setting.



- It is always not popular with students; many of them feel they would rather relate to the teacher as individuals than interact with another learner who may be just as linguistically weak as they are.
- The actual choice of paired partner can be problematic; especially if students frequently find themselves with someone they are not keen on (p.165).

### **Activities in Pair-work**

Before applying pair-work technique in the class room, it is very much important that the teacher must understand what pair-work technique involves. As I have written previously, in pair-work the teacher divided the whole class into pairs. Every student works with his/her partner and all the pairs work at the same time (it is sometimes called simultaneous pair-work). But it is not same as public or open pair-work, with pairs of students speaking in turn in front of the class.

Doff (2008), gives the following activities that can be involved in pair-work.

#### a. Demonstrate Active A

Explain that it is an example of pairwork used for controlled oral practice; it practises vocabulary and conditional structures.

- i. Ask the first two questions to the whole class, to show how the activity works. (More than one answer is possible: e.g. (a): you will be sick/ you will get a stomach aches; (b): you will be sick/ you will get fat.)
- ii. Divide teachers into pairs to ask and answer the other questions.
- iii. When most pairs have finished, go through the answers together.
- iv. Ask some pairs to tell you the questions they thought of themselves. Get other teachers to answer them.

b. Demonstrate Activity B

Explain that it is an example of a reading activity done in pairs. Students work together to try to understand the text.

- i. briefly explain what the teachers have to do. Then divide them into pairs to do the activity.
- ii. When most pairs have finished, stop the activity. Discuss the questions together. Ask teachers to tell you any words whose meaning they could not guess, and discuss them together.

c. Demonstrate Activity C

Explain that it is an example of a discussion activity done in groups. This is a much freer activity, and aims to develop fluency in speaking.

- i. Divide teachers into groups of four or five. Read through the interactions and make sure that each group understands what to do. If you like, choose one 'secretary' in each group to write the list -but emphasise that everyone in the group should agree on what to write.
- ii. While the activity is going on, move from group to group, but do not interrupt more than is necessary.
- iii. When some groups have finished their discussion, stop the activity. Ask one person from each group to report on what they decided.

### **1.1.3 Teaching of Reading Skill**

Before teaching reading skill, everyone should know what reading skill is. Some terms related to reading skill have been briefly presented below.

#### **1.1.3.1 Reading Comprehension**

In general sense, reading refers to understand a written text. In other words, reading means extracting the required information from the text. In the simple way

we can define reading as understanding or making sense of given text. This means the meaning of the reading text not merely lies in the text waiting to be passively observed instead while reading a text, the reader should be actively involved and work to get the meaning of the text. Khaniya (2005, p. 139) opines, "In a usual way, reading is handled as reading comprehension. Then instead of defining reading, it is useful to deal with reading comprehension."

Reading comprehension has been defined in many ways. Grellet (1981, p. 3) defines reading comprehension as "extracting required information from it as efficiently as possible." Reading varies according to the purpose of reading and type of text. For example, we read advertisement given in a newspaper is different from the way we read academic article.

There is a great controversy between the scholars in defining reading comprehension. Some argue that it is a single competence. On the contrary, others claim that it is not a single competence instead it is an inclusive term which incorporates several sub skills. In this connection, Khaniya (2005, p.139) argues, "While dealing with reading comprehension, there is also a debate on whether it is a single competence or it is composed of several reading sub-skills."

### **1.1.3.2 Sub-skills of Reading**

As mentioned above, reading is understanding, which includes extracting the required information from the text as proficiently as possible. Therefore, it is a process of communication because the writer communicates with the reader and the reader interacts with the writer's beliefs and intension. It is one of the basic skills of language development. It includes both visual and non-visual experiences and behavior. Therefore, there are several sub-skills of reading. It means, it is a skill which is composite of other several sub-skills. According to Munby (1978), sub-skills of reading are:

- Recognizing the script of a language.

- Deducing the meaning and use of unfamiliar lexical items.
- Understanding explicitly stated information.
- Understanding information when not explicitly stated.
- Understanding conceptual meaning.
- Understanding the communicative value (function) of sentences and utterance.
- Understanding relations within the sentences.
- Understanding relation between the parts of a text through lexical cohesion devices.
- Understanding cohesion between parts of a text through grammatical cohesion devices.
- Interpreting text by going outside it.
- Recognizing indicators in disclosure.
- Identifying the main point or important information in a piece of discourse.
- Distinguishing the main idea from supporting details.
- Extracting salient points to summarize (the text, an idea etc.)
- Selective extraction of relevant points from a text.
- Basic reference skills.
- Scanning to locate specifically required information.
- Transcoding information to diagrammatic display (pp. 123-131).

Therefore, to be a proficient reader, one has to develop the above mentioned skills.

For the purpose of developing these skills, we can do several types exercises.

Grellet (1981) suggests the following exercises to develop the reading skills. To clarify the organization of the passage, the questions can be about:

- the function of the passage
- the general organization (e.g. argumentative)
- the rhetorical organization (e.g. contrast, comparison)
- the cohesive devices (e.g. link-words)

- the intrasentential relations (e.g. derivation, morphology, hyponymy)
- to clarify the contents of the passage.

The questions can be about:

- plain facts( direct reference)
- implied facts ( inference )
- deduced meaning (supposition)
- evaluation (p.5).

### **1.1.3.3 Types of Reading**

All the readers have their own purpose for reading a text. That means, no readers go through a text unless they have some purposes in mind reading can be a different types on the basis of speed, noise, purpose of reading and focus of attention. A brief a count of types of reading have been given below:

#### **a. On the basis of Speed**

On the basis of speed, there are two types of reading: slow reading and rapid reading. They are briefly described below:

#### **Slow Reading**

Slow reading refers to the reading in relatively slow speed. It occurs in the beginning stage of reading and while reading difficult passages. It is fruitful while teaching listening (presentation stage). It is done for the purpose of understanding in-depth ideas and learning about the language system.

#### **Fast/Rapid Reading**

Fast reading refers to the reading in relatively fast speed. Fast reading is done by the native speakers and learners after being expert in foreign language. It occurs while reading silently. This type of reading is used while reading simple text and

for self study. The activities like summarizing and paraphrasing can be given to the students for practicing rapid reading.

**b. On the Basis of Noise**

Silent reading and loud reading are the types under the noise basis. A brief description of these two types is mentioned below:

**Silent Reading**

Silent reading refers to understanding the required information from graphic symbols with the help of our eyes. It involves mental process without making use of organs of speech. Experiment has proved that more comprehension achieved only through silent reading. A good silent reader does not allow even the movement of lips and the use of pen and pencil on the print. The readers are not allowed to walk their heads. It is useful for self study and library reading.

**Loud Reading**

Loud reading involves both physical and mental process. It changes the graphic symbols into in the spoken form and interprets them. It involves pronunciation and helps in relating spelling with pronunciation. It is useful especially for lower level students and reading for others who are blind and illiterate. To read aloud, the readers should bare the good knowledge of suprasegmental features, i.e. stress, intonation, rhyme, etc. Therefore, reading aloud is a difficult skill. In some cases if the reader cannot maintain the suprasegmental features while reading the text loudly, the reading may convey another meaning. So, it is not better to ask the students to read unseen text aloud which contains new vocabulary items. The students are unable to concentrate adequately on the meaning of the text while reading loudly.

**c. On the Basis of Focus of Attention**

On the basis of focus of attention, there are two types of reading which are briefly described below.

**Skimming**

Skimming is the rapid type of reading in which the eyes run quickly over the text to discover the main ideas or gist of it. It entails the readers' ability to pick our main points rapidly disregarding what is not essential or relevant to that general idea of the text. Listeners often need the same skill to listening for main message and disregarding the repetition, falls stars an irrelevance that are often features of spoken language.

**Scanning**

Scanning is a kind of search reading in which the eyes run quickly over a text to find out a particular piece of information. It focuses its attention to see whether a particular point is present in the text or not and to locate it. The particular information may be the name of person, places, and things, date of some events, etc. It involves the checking of specific items and can also be called as 'item check reading'.

**d. On the Basis of Purpose of Reading**

There are two types of reading on the basis of purpose of reading. The brief accounts of these types are given below:

**Intensive reading**

In intensive reading, students are expected to understand everything they read and be able to answer the detailed vocabulary and comprehension questions. This is more and accuracy activity, involving reading for detail. Short reading extract of a moderate degree of difficulty and contained features which merit detailed study

from a basis for intensive reading practice. The purpose of intensive reading is to gate detailed information from the text.

### **Extensive Reading**

It is a kind of reading which is turn in order to gain a general understanding of what is written on the text. While reading extensively, students are expected to understand the general meaning of text without necessarily understanding the each and every vocabulary items given in the text. It is a good rapid silent reading for pleasure. In extensive reading the readers have the option of skipping the whole section they find either too difficult or less interesting. This includes the reading of short stories, novels, magazines, etc. The purpose of extensive reading is to get pleasure as well as information.

#### **1.1.3.4 Importance of Reading Skill**

We know that reading is one of the basic skills of language development. We can transfer our message in the written form and the concerned people get the information by reading the message. Therefore, it has become one of the important means of communication. Furthermore, different writers communicate to the reader and the reader interacts with the writers' assumptions or intentions. From the entertainment point of view also, reading is very important. We can enjoy by reading several different literary works of different writers. Therefore, one of the aims of foreign language teaching must be to make the learners proficient in reading skill. In the same line, highlighting the importance of teaching reading skill, Rivers (1968) argues:

Recent intensive discussion of ways of developing the listening and speaking skills from the beginning stages of foreign-language study has sometimes the erroneous impression that advocates of active oral methods neglect the



reading skill. As a result, foreign language teachers are sometimes accused of wishing to produce "language illiterates" (p. 213).

He further says:

future graduates of foreign-language classes will be fluent chatterbox who are able to produce rapid-fire utterances in a foreign language but have nothing worthwhile to say, because have never have been given the opportunity to share the thinking of great minds of another culture, and so to widen the horizon of their knowledge and understanding (p. 213).

It is equally important in the field of science of technology. Information relative to science and technology are being transferred with the help of reading and writing skills. Show to be touched with the recent development in the field of science and technology everybody should bare the proficient skill of reading. Moreover, to use the recent gift of science and technology one has to bare the reading skill because he/she will not be able to operate with those gifts in the lack of reading skills because he/she should be able to read the manuals.

From the cultural prospective to, reading is very much important. Through reading different cultural texts we can gain the knowledge of different cultures of the huge world just sitting in our room. In other words, we can enrich our own culture with the help of reading and writing skills, i.e. we can write about our culture and expand it through the readers all over the world.

The academic field will also be handicapped without reading skill. All the books, Journals, articles etc. are in the written form. So, if student lack this scale they become unable to read the prescribed text book and other several different articles

which are helpful to support their study. In fact, all the academic activities will not take place in the lack of reading skill.

#### **1.1.4 Stages of Teaching Reading**

As defined previously, reading comprehension is a process of understanding or getting the intended information from the text as proficiently as possible. Reading becomes meaningful only when the readers become able to gain the intended meaning or information from the text they have read. Therefore, teaching reading is a complex job to help the language teachers, different language teaching experts have designed their own stages or classroom procedures of teaching reading. Doff (1988) gives the three separate stages of teaching reading as: pre-reading, while-reading, and post-reading.

Similarly, Grellet (1981) provides the following classroom procedures of teaching reading.

The following procedures, for instance, is very helpful with most texts.

- Consider the text as a whole, its title, accompanying picture(s) or diagram(s), the paragraphs, the type face used, and make guesses about what the text is about, who wrote it, who it is for, where it appeared, etc.
- Skim through the text a first time to see if your hypothesis were right. Then ask yourself a number of questions about the contents of the text.
- Read the text again, more slowly and carefully this time, trying to understand as much as you can and trying to answer the questions you asked yourself (pp.10-11).

#### **1.1.5 Testing Reading**

In teaching and learning, the term testing is always associated because it is a tool to measure the learner's ability in learning. The term testing and teaching and learning refers to testing of various skills of language viz. listening, speaking,

reading and writing, where as reading means a process of retrieving and comprehending some kinds of information and ideas. Teaching and testing are so closely interrelated that it is virtually impossible to work in either field without being concerned with the one another.

Testing reading is not a simple job because there is great debate among the scholars on the nature of reading i.e. whether it is a single competence or it is composed of several reading sub skills. But for our convenience, it will be wise to adopt strategies to test reading as a combination of a set of several sub skills.

There are several test items to test reading. We can use different test items of reading according to the type of reading materials, the purpose of reading and the level of learners. Some test items which are used in testing reading are: true/false, multiple choice, close test, short answer questions, completion item, etc. The brief description of these items is given below.

**a. Multiple Choice Items**

In this type of test, a question is given with three, four or five options. Students have to select one that is the based answer to the questions.

**b. Short Answer Question**

It is another type of test item used in testing reading skill where the students have to give a short answer to the question on the basis of the text they have read. these questions help the teacher to evaluate his students and to measure how much the learners have known whatever was taught.

**c. True/False Item**

It is one of the most widely used tests to check reading comprehension. This item is easy to construct then multiple choice items. In true/false items, statements are

given related to the message of the text and students have to find out whether the given statements are true or false.

#### **d. The Cloze Test**

In recent years, the cloze test has become popular among ESL/EFL teachers. In this test, some words are deleted at a regular interval. Generally, a fifth or seventh word from the text is deleted and students have to fill the blanks using their ability or capacity. They have to fill in the exact word or an appropriate word without destroying the meaning of the text.

#### **1.1.6 Action Research**

As the name suggests, action research incorporates two words: 'action' and 'research'. In general sense, 'action' refers to the new activities that teachers or researchers do in the classroom to solve the problem and 'research' refers to the sense of enquiring or exploring new knowledge and ideas. Directly speaking, it is not a study designed because action research is guided by the desire to take action. It is carried out to identify areas of concern, develop and test alternatives and experiment with new approaches. Similarly, Burns (1999, p.13) argues, "The approach is only action research when it is collaborative, though it is important to realize that the action research of the group is achieved through the critically examined action of individual group members."

From the very beginning, action research has been used to solve practical problems or issues. So, the practical orientation is a defining characteristic of action research. Since action research is more practical in nature, mostly the practitioners undertake it in order to improve their own practices. Furthermore, it is the study of social situations with a view to improve the quality of actions within it. Nunan (1992, p.9) says, "Especially action research is small scale intervention in the functioning of the real world and a close examination of the effects

of such intervention." Since it is carried out to improve or solve the immediate problems, it is collaborative in nature and always aims at changing themes or the existing situations. In the same line, Wallace (1998) defines action research as, "as a strategy for professional development which is accomplished by reflecting on the practitioners regular activities (series of activities) (as cited in Bhattarai, 2005, p.2). Likewise, Kemmis and Mc Taggart (1992) define action research as:

Action research is concerned equally with changing individuals, on the one hand, on the other, the culture of the groups, institutions and societies to which they belong. The culture of a group can be defined in terms of the characteristic substance and form of the language and discourses, activities and practices, and social relationships and organization which constitute the interactions of the group (p. 16).

But Nunan (1992) argues:

Collaborative or group activity aimed at changing things need not be necessary for action research because these may be there many situations were a single practitioner can conduct the research without the involvement of others and his/her aim might be to increase the understanding rather than changing the phenomena under investigation (p. 18).

On the basis of above mentioned definitions, we can conclude that action research is carried out by the practitioners at the local level, it is collaborative where the researcher works in collaborations with professional researcher or co-workers, and it is carried out to solve immediate problems and to bring change by introducing action strategies.

Cohen et al. (2007) summarize action research in the following points.

- i. It works on, and tries to solve real, practitioner- identified problems of everyday practice.
- ii. It is collaborative and builds in teacher involvement.
- iii. It seeks causes and tries to work on those causes.
- iv. The solutions are suggested by the practitioner involved.
- v. It involves a divergent phase and a convergent phase.
- vi. It plans an intervention by the practitioners themselves.
- vii. It implements the intervention.
- viii. It evaluates the success of the intervention in solving the identified problem (p. 307).

#### **1.1.6.1 Importance of Action Research in Language Classroom**

As action research is conducted in order to solve some immediate problem or change the existing situation, it is very much important in the language class room because it helps both teacher and practitioners to improve their professional skills and to solve the immediate problem of their classroom.

We generally assumed that teacher are just consumers who should adopt the new approaches, methods, and technique generated by the researcher or experts no matter how relevant they are to the need of the students and classroom context. But sometimes it is very difficult apply all the methodologies generated by the researcher of experts which creates difficulty in the language classroom.

Sometimes the so called new techniques do not work in the classroom. So, the first thing for the teacher is to find out what the real problem (s) is/are with his her students.

In this concern, Elyildirim and Ashton ( 2006,p.297) opine that "classroom action research occurs when teachers reflect critically about the teaching situations, identifying learning or instructional problems, and institute methods to solve them.

It is related to a local problem and is conducted in local setting therefore, the main purpose of action research is to solve classroom problem through the application of scientific method.

It is often the teacher who initiates action research to solve their practical problems in the classroom with the help of their colleagues, students, [parents and other stake holders. Therefore, action research begins and strengthens collaborative learning and teaching activities among the teachers.

From the above mention discussion, we can conclude that action research in language classroom is a tool for teacher and curriculum development which incorporates both theory and practice and it helps language teachers to find their problems and the ways for their solution which bring change in their teaching.

#### **1.1.6.2 Characteristics of Action Research**

Action research is transformative means of responding to the changing profiles of the classes and developing new teaching strategies and approaches to meet the students' heterogeneous needs. It is carried out to bring changes in the existing situation and mostly carried out by the practitioners to improve their current practices and to find out the solution for their immediate classroom problems. Thus, we can say that 'collaborative', or 'participatory nature', 'problem oriented', 'critical and reflective', etc. are some of the identifying characteristics of action research. In the same line, Burns (1999, p.13) identifies the three characteristics of action research as "firstly, that it is carried out by practitioners (for our purpose classroom teachers) rather than outside researcher, secondary, that it is collaborative, and thirdly, that it is aimed at changing things."

Similarly, Kember (2000) gives the following characteristics of action research:

- Social practice
- Aimed towards improvement

- Cyclical
- Systematic enquiry
- Reflective
- Participative
- Determined by the practitioners (as cited in Norton,2009, pp. 54-56)

Likewise, according to Mckernan (1991), characteristics of action research are:

- It is collaborative
- Seeks to understand particular complex social situations.
- Seeks to understand the process of change with in social systems.
- Makes for practical problem solving action as work as expanding scientific knowledge.
- Focuses on those problems that are of immediate concern to practitioners.
- It is participatory.
- It includes evaluation and reflection (as cited in Cohen et al, 2007, p. 299).

### **1.1.6.3. Process of Action Research**

Different scholars have recommended their own stages of action research. Among several sets of stages recommended by different scholars, I have mentioned selected set of stages of action research here.

According to Nunan (1992, p.19), the stages of action research are:

#### **Step-1: Initiation**

Here, a teacher / practitioner outline a problem of classroom teaching.

#### **Step-2: Preliminary investigation**

Data is collected through the closer inspection of situation. For example, actual classroom setting is taken to collect data.



### Step-3: Hypothesis

Assumptions are formed based on the data collection from observation.

### Step-4: Intervention

Now, the teacher comes up with a new strategy in teaching by intervening current system.

### Step-5: Evaluation

After that, assessment about the intervention is done after some time.

### Step-6: Dissemination

Findings of research are presented in a workshop or at conference.

### Step-7: Follow up

Still, the teacher goes on finding out other strategies.

In the same way, Sagor (2005, p. 4) sets out a straightforward four step model of action research as:

- Clarify vision and targets.
- Articulate appropriate theory.
- Implement plan and collect data.
- Reflect on the data and plan informed action

Moreover, Norton (2009, p.70) mentions the following stages of action research:

Step-1: Identifying a problem/paradox/issues/difficulty.

Step-2: Thinking of ways to tackle the problem.

Step-3: Doing it.

Step-4: Evaluating it. (actual research findings)

Step-5: Modifying future practice.

Harmer (2001) gives the following model of action research:

**Figure No.1**  
**Flow Chart Displaying the Process of an Action Research**

identify a problem / issue

think of questions to ask / information to be gained

collect data

analyze data

decide on future action

(p.415)

Among the stages of action research mentioned above, the researcher will make use of the model recommended by Norton (2009) to conduct his research study.

## **1.2 Review of the Related Literature**

A number of research studies have been undertaken related to teaching reading comprehension at the department of English Education, Faculty of Education, T.U. some of them have been reviewed here.

Siwakoti (1996) had conducted a research entitled 'An Analysis of the Reading Proficiency of Secondary School of Jhapa District'. The objectives were to analyze the reading proficiency of the students of government -aided and private schools to test their comprehension ability a lexical, textual and contextual levels in reading a text. His study showed that the students of private schools were better than the government-aided schools.

Likewise, Shrestha (1998) made a research reports on 'Reading Comprehension in English Language of Students of Grade VIII.' She studied on the students of

Lalitpur District and found that the students could perform better on seen passage than on unseen passage. She also found that performances on seen and unseen passages are positively correlated.

In the same way, Subedi (2000) carried out a study on 'Reading Comprehension of Grade Nine Students of Kathmandu and Jhapa'. The objective of the study was to find out the comparative reading comprehension ability of the grade nine students of Kathmandu and Jhapa. He found out that the students of Kathmandu at urban area had better performance in higher reading comprehension in magazines than in newspaper; whereas rural students of Jhapa were also better in the same.

Similarly, Poudel (2005) carried out a research on 'TOFEL Based Reading Comprehension Ability of Bachelor Level Students.' He found out that the students of TU were very poor in reading comprehension ability in terms of the TOFEL standard. He also found out that the students of institute of medicine were in the highest rank and the students of faculty of management were in the lowest rank in reading comprehension of English text.

Neupane (2006) carried out a research entitled 'Reading Proficiency of Grade Ten Students on Kathmandu and Gorkha District'. The objectives were to find out the reading comprehension in terms of skimming, scanning, inferring, and guessing meaning and compared the achievements between the students of those districts. This study found out the reading proficiency of the students in grade ten is good in terms of scanning and reading proficiency of the students is not adequate in terms of guessing meaning. It showed that there is no significance difference between the performance of the students of Kathmandu and Gorkha district.

Pokhrel (2007) conducted a research entitled 'Reading Comprehension Ability in the English Language; A Case of Grade Nine Students' to find out the ability of grade nine students in reading comprehension in Kavrepalanchowk District. He

found out that students of grade nine seemed to be good in their reading comprehension.

Khadka (2008) conducted a research entitled 'Reading Comprehension Ability of Differentially Able and Able Students.' His objectives were to find out the reading comprehension ability of the differentially able and able students of secondary level and compare their abilities in terms of informant-oriented and content-oriented variables. He found out that the students (AS) were higher than the differentially able (DAS) both in seen and unseen reading text.

Bhandari (2008) carried out the research entitled 'Reading Comprehension of Poetry and Prose'. His objective was to compare the reading proficiency in English poetry and prose. He found out the students had better comprehension ability in prose texts than in poetry at B.Ed first year.

Koirala (2008) conducted a research entitled 'Reading Comprehension of Poetry and Short Story' to find out the comprehension level of the students in Poetry and Short Story and make comparison. He found out that the comprehension level of the students is better in Poetry than in short story.

Silwal (2010) carried out a research entitled 'Teaching Reading Comprehension by Trained and Untrained Teachers' to find out the importance of teacher training in teaching reading comprehension. He found out that teachers should make more use of student centered techniques and the teaching of reading comprehension should be skill-oriented rather than knowledge-oriented. Thus, this study is different from the previous research studies as it attempts to find out the role of pair work technique in developing reading comprehension.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- a. To find out the role of pair work technique in developing reading comprehension.
- b. To suggest some pedagogical implications.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This research study will be significant for the language teachers, students, text book writers, syllabus designers, methodologists, researchers, linguists and all other who are directly or indirectly related in the field of ELT.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **METHODOLOGY**

In order to accomplish the objectives of the study, I adopted the following methodological strategies.

#### **2.1 Sources of Data**

I made use of both the primary and secondary sources of data. Thus, this study was based on the following sources of information.

##### **2.1.1 Primary Sources of Data**

The primary sources of data were the students of grade nine from Shree Jana Jyoti Secondary School of Lamjung district.

##### **2.1.2 Secondary Sources of Data**

For the facilitation of the research work, I had consulted Rivers (1968), Grellet (1981), Nunan (1992), Brown (1994), Larsen-Freeman (2000), Richards and Rodgers (2001), Harmer (2008), Norton (2009) and different theses, articles, and other written documents available in printed form which were related to my study.

#### **2.2 Sampling Procedure**

Thirtytwo students of grade nine from Shree Jana Jyoti Secondary School of Lamjung district were selected for teaching and testing purposes. They were purposively selected as the sample of research.

#### **2.3 Tools for Data Collection**

I used one pre-test, two progressive tests and one post -test in order to elicit the required data. The same test item was used for both pre-test and post-test while progressive test were constructed depending upon the progress of the lesson. The test items were made from the class IX compulsory English. I made use of 13 seen and 10 unseen passages as reading texts during his research work. There was only

written test consisting of 25 full marks. Five test items i.e. matching items, true false, short answer questions, summary writing and multiple choice items were constructed and each item was of 5 marks.

#### **2.4 Process of Data Collection**

First of all, I visited the selected school and asked the authority for permission to carry out research. Then, I discussed with the English teacher of Jana Jyoti Secondary School to find out the problem behind developing reading comprehension. On the basis of that discussion I find out the major issues or problems of my research work. Then, I decided to apply pair-work technique to teach reading skill. I constructed the test items for pre-test and post-test and lesson plans for teaching. The pre-test was administered before teaching students to identify their current level of competence in reading comprehension. Then, I made use of pair work technique to teach reading comprehension. I taught 23 lessons applying pair work technique. To measure the students' progress I conducted progressive test once a week. Finally, I administered the post-test using the same test item as in the pre-test. Then, the result of test was compared to determine the role of pair work technique in developing reading comprehension.

#### **2.5 Limitations of the Study**

This study had the following limitations:

- The study was limited to only one school, Shree Jana Jyoti Secondary School, Lamjung district.
- It was limited to only thirty two students of that school.
- The study was limited to learning of English in the classroom sitting only.
- There was only one group which was taught for twenty three days.
- The study was based on pair work technique.
- The study included only the students of grade nine.
- I made use of the written tests only.
- I used only the true falls items, matching items, short answer questions, summary writing and multiple choice items to test students' achievements.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

The findings of the collected data have been tabulated, compared, analyzed, interpreted and presented descriptively as well as analytically using appropriate tables.

#### **3.1 Analysis of the Test Scores**

This section deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data, which were collected from the primary sources. This study was carried out to find out the role of pair work technique in teaching reading comprehension. To accomplish the goal of the study, the researcher selected thirty-two students of Shree Jana Jyoti Secondary School, Lamjung where he taught twenty-three lessons applying pair-work technique. Individual test scores obtained from pre-test and post-test have been analyzed and interpreted including two progressive test scores to show the development in reading skill through pair-work technique. Since the main objective of the thesis is to find out the role of pair-work technique, ten seen and thirteen unseen texts were used as a reading text to manipulate reading skill. In this chapter, the researcher has tabulated, analyzed, interpreted and compared the data in the following order:

- i. Student-wise Analysis and Interpretation of the Test Score
- ii. Item-wise Analysis and Interpretation of the Test Score.

##### **3.1.1 Student-wise Analysis and Interpretation of the Test Score**

In this section, the individual scores of the students on pre-test, post-test and progressive tests have been analyzed, interpreted and compared.



### 3.1.1.1 Pre-test and Post-test

Before starting the actual teaching, a pre-test was administered to know the present level of the students. Then, researcher recorded their scores to analyze and interpret further with the aim of developing the level of understanding in reading. Thereafter, the researcher taught the students for twenty-three days through pair-work technique to help them develop their reading skill. Two progressive tests were also administered to determine how much their reading skill has been developed. The researcher used the same test items in the pre-test and post test. The pre-test and post-test consisted of 5 types of items (matching, true/false, multiple choice, short question answer and summery writing); each item was of five marks, hence, 25 full marks.

The result of the pre-test and post-test has been recorded in the following table.

**Table No. 1**  
**Individual Scores of Pre-test and Post-test**

S. N.	F. M.	Scores on Pre-test	No. of Students in Pre-test	Percentage in Pre-test	Scores on Post-test	No. of Students in Post-test	Percentage in Post-test
1	25	15	4	12.50	23	2	6.25
2	25	14	3	9.38	22	3	9.38
3	25	13	1	3.13	21	5	15.62
4	25	12	6	18.75	19	6	18.75
5	25	11	8	25.00	18	6	18.75
6	25	10	7	21.88	16	1	3.13
7	25	9	1	3.13	13	2	6.25
8	25	8	1	3.13	11	4	12.50
9	25	7	1	3.13	10	2	6.25
10	25	-	-	-	9	1	3.13
Total			32	100		32	100
Pre-Test Average Score					11.53		
Post Test Average Score					17.53		

The table shows that the pre-test average score is 11.53, which is 17.53 in the post-test. Fourteen students are above the average score, which is 56% of the total students and more than half of the students i.e. 18 students are under the average score in the pre-test, which is 44% of the total students. Whereas, in the post-test, 22 students are above the average score which is nearly 69% of the total students. Ten students are under the average score, which is 43% of the total students.

The highest score obtained in the pre-test is 15. Only four students have scored highest mark, which is 12.50% of the total student and seven marks is the lowest score of the pre-test. One student has scored seven marks, which is 3.13% of the total students. Whereas, the highest and lowest scores of the post-test are 23 and 9 respectively. Two students have scored 23, which is 6.25% of the total students and one student has scored 9 marks in the post-test, which is 3.13% of the total students.

This result shows that pair-work technique has become very effective to develop the reading skill of the students.

### **3.1.1.2 Pre-test and First Progressive Test**

After taking the pre-test, researcher recorded the scores of the students individually and started the real classroom teaching applying pair-work technique. After a week of pre-test, the researcher administered the first progressive test to determine their level of progress in reading skill. Both pre-test and first progressive test comprises five items each containing 5 marks. The following table shows the scores of the students on the pre-test and the first progressive test.

**Table No. 2**

**Individual Scores on Pre-test and First Progressive Test**

S. N.	F. M.	Scores on Pre-test	No. of students in Pre-test	Percentage in Pre-test	Scores on First Progressive test	No. of students in First Progressive test	Percentage in First Progressive test
1	25	15	4	12.50	20	2	6.25
2	25	14	3	9.38	18	4	12.50
3	25	13	1	3.13	17	2	6.25
4	25	12	6	18.75	16	6	18.75
5	25	11	8	25.00	15	4	12.50
6	25	10	7	21.88	13	5	15.62
7	25	9	1	3.13	11	4	12.50
8	25	8	1	3.13	10	3	9.38
9	25	7	1	3.13	9	2	6.25
Total			32	100		32	100
Pre-Test Average Score						11.53	
First Progressive Average Score						14.34	

As the table shows that the average score in the pre-test is 11.53, which is 14.34 in the first progressive test. Fourteen students, which is 56% of total students are below the average and 18 students, which is 44% of total students are above the average score in the pre-test. Whereas, 18 students are above the average score and 14 students are below the average score in the first progressive test, which are 56% and 44% of the total students respectively.

Two students have scored 15 marks, which is the highest score in the pre-test and the lowest score is 7, which is obtained by only one student. The highest score of the first progressive test is 20, which is obtained by two students and 9 is the lowest score, which is obtained by 2 students.

Since the average score and the number of students who are able to score the above average have been increased in the first progressive test, it can be claimed

that the pair-work technique has facilitated the students to progress their reading skill.

### 3.1.1.3 First Progressive Test and Second Progressive Test

After conducting the first progressive test, researcher again administered the second progressive test after 12 days of teaching to determine their progress in reading skill. Both, the first progressive and second progressive tests, consisted of 5 items each containing five marks.

The following table shows the scores of the students on the first progressive test and second progressive test.

**Table No. 3**

**Individual Scores on First Progressive Test and Second Progressive Test**

S. N.	F. M.	Scores in First Progressive test	No. of Students in First Progressive test	Percentage in First Progressive test	Scores in Second Progressive test	No. of Students in Second Progressive test	Percentage in Second Progressive test
1	25	20	2	6.25	22	2	6.25
2	25	18	4	12.50	20	3	9.38
3	25	17	2	6.25	19	3	9.38
4	25	16	6	18.75	17	5	15.62
5	25	15	4	12.50	16	6	18.75
6	25	13	5	15.62	14	3	9.37
7	25	11	4	12.50	13	2	6.25
8	25	10	3	9.37	12	2	6.25
9	25	9	2	6.25	10	4	12.50
10	25	-	-	-	9	2	6.25
Total				100		32	100
First Progressive Average Score						14.34	
Second Progressive Average Score						15.38	

As the table shows that the first progressive test average score is 14.34. Eighteen students are above the average score, which is 56% of the total students and 14 students are below the average score, which is 44% of the total students. The second progressive average score is 15.38. Nineteen students, which is nearly 60% of the total students are above the average score. Still 13 students, which is 40.50% of the total students have scored below the average in the second progressive test.

The highest score of the first progressive test is 20, which is obtained by two students and 9 is the lowest score, which is obtained by 2 students. Twenty-two is the highest score in the second progressive test, which is obtained by two students. The lowest score is 9 and two students have scored 9 marks in the second progressive test.

In comparison to the first progressive test, the students have again shown the satisfactory progress in second progressive test. Reading is understanding whereas, taking the exam is the matter of writing, speaking or doing some practical work which are different skills. Therefore, the result may not be as exact as the students' understanding. While teaching reading one should not ignore other skills, so did the researcher.

#### **3.1.1.4 Second Progressive Test and Post-test**

After conducting the pre-test and two progressive tests, at the end of the action research, the researcher conducted the post-test. The researcher administered the same test item for pre and post test to maintain the difficulty level of the test items.

The following table shows the scores of the students on the second progressive test and post-test.

**Table No. 4****Individual Scores in the Second Progressive Test and Post-test**

S. N.	F. M.	Scores on Second Progressive test	No. of Students in Second Progressive test	Percentage in Second Progressive Test	Scores on Post-test	No. of Students in Post-test	Percentage in Post-test
1	25	22	2	6.25	23	2	6.25
2	25	20	3	9.37	22	3	9.37
3	25	19	3	9.37	21	5	15.62
4	25	17	5	15.62	19	6	18.75
5	25	16	6	18.75	18	6	18.75
6	25	14	3	9.37	16	1	3.12
7	25	13	2	6.25	13	2	6.25
8	25	12	2	6.25	11	4	12.50
9	25	10	4	12.50	10	2	6.25
10	25	9	2	6.25	9	1	3.12
Total						32	100
Second Progressive Test Average Score					15.38		
Post Test Average Score					17.32		

As the table shows that the second progressive average score is 15.38. Nineteen students, which is nearly 60% of the total students are above the average score. Still 13 students, which is 40.50% of the total students have scored below the average in the second progressive test. Whereas, 17.35 marks is the average score in post-test. Twenty-two students are above the average score, which is nearly 69% of the total students. Ten students are under the average score, which is 43% of the total students.

Twenty-two is the highest score in the second progressive test, which is obtained by two students. The lowest score is 9 and two students have scored 9 marks in the second progressive test. Whereas, the highest and lowest scores of the post-test is 23 and 9 respectively. Two students have scored 23, which is 6.25% of the total students and one student has scored 9 marks in the post-test.

Therefore, in comparison to the second progressive test, post-test scores show the remarkable progress of the students in developing reading skill through the pair-work technique. This result shows that the pair-work technique, which most of the language teachers of Nepal do not apply in their classroom, can be very useful for the students in developing reading skill.

### **3.2 Item-wise Analysis and Interpretation**

In this section, the result has not just been analyzed and interpreted as a whole just to show the progress in each test within the period of research, but each test item has also been analyzed and interpreted further to determine the students' progress and proficiency in each separate item.

Five kinds of test items (multiple-choice, true/false, matching, short answer question and summery writing) were used as a research tool. There were five questions in each test item apart from short answer questions and summery writing. Two questions were included under short answer question which were of 2.5 marks and there was only one question in summery writing and was of 5 marks. Therefore, multiple-choice, matching and true/false have 160 responses because each item carries 5 marks (i.e. 32 students x 5 marks = 160 responses for each item) but short answer question and summery writing items have 64 and 32 responses because two questions were included under short answer question whereas only one question was in the summery writing (i.e. 32 students x 2 questions = 64 and 32 students x 1 question = 32).

### 3.2.1 Pre-test

The following table shows the item wise responses of each item in the pre-test.

**Table No. 5**  
**Item -wise Responses on the Pre-test**

S.N.	Test Items									
	Multiple-Choice		Matching		True/False		Short Answers		Summary Writing	
1. Correct Responses	98	61.25%	72	45%	94	58.75%	22	34.35%	8	25%
2. Incorrect Responses	62	38.75%	88	55%	66	41.25%	44	68.75	24	75%
Total	160	100%	160	100%	160	100%	64	100%	32	100%

As the above table shows, there are 5 items; each carrying 5 marks apart from short answer question and summery writing. The multiple choice item has the highest number of correct responses (i.e. 98), which is just above 61%, out of 160 responses. The true/false item has 94 correct numbers of responses, which is the second highest number of responses that becomes 58.75% .The summery writing item has the lowest number of correct responses, which is 25% of the total responses. Therefore, obviously, the summery writing item has the highest number of incorrect responses in percentage, i.e.24 incorrect responses out of 32, which is 75% of the total responses. Moreover, the multiple- choice item has the lowest number of incorrect responses. It has only 39% incorrect responses.

Therefore, overall the short answer question and summery writing have high number of incorrect responses in percentage. The total number of correct responses is 294, out of 576 responses, which is 51.5% of total responses. This table shows that 9th grade students' understanding in reading texts is not satisfactory. Because their responses to multiple-choice, matching and true/false



are better than the responses given to the short answer question and summery writing, which needs the high level of understanding of reading text in comparison to other items i.e. multiple-choice, true/false and matching item. Since the students can answer multiple-choice, matching and true/false item by guessing and answers of these items are also very easy to copy from their friends.

### 3.2.2 Progressive Test- 1

After tabulating the score or the responses of the items in the pre-test, the level of the students' had been determined. Moreover, the target is to help them more i.e. develop their reading skill through pair-work technique. Therefore, after conducting the classroom teaching, the similar type of test item had been administered to determine their progress, which is shown in the following table.

**Table No. 6**  
**Item-wise Responses on the First Progressive Test**

S.N.	Test Items									
	Multiple-Choice		Matching		True/False		Short Answers		Summary Writing	
1. Correct Responses	101	63.15%	126	78.75%	121	75.65%	25	39.05%	10	31.25%
2. Incorrect Responses	59	36.85%	34	21.25%	39	24.35%	39	60.95%	22	68.75%
Total	160	100%	160	100%	160	100%	64	100%	32	100%

The table shows, matching, true/false and multiple-choice items have high number of the correct responses. Again, short answer question and summery writing items have the low number of correct responses. Moreover, matching item has the highest number of correct responses, where the total number of correct response is 126 out of 160 responses and summery writing item has the lowest number of correct responses, where the total number of correct response is 10 out of 32 responses and it is only 31.25% of total responses. Total number of the correct

responses has increased to 383 out of 576 responses of all the items, which is just above 66% and total number of the incorrect responses is 193 (33.50%) out of total responses of all the items (576).

Observing the distribution of correct responses in the table of each item, the progress is satisfactory. Comparatively, the students have increased their level of understanding. Regarding the incorrect responses, summery writing item has the highest number of incorrect responses. It shows that this item is problematic for the students though they have progressed far more than in the pre-test. Similarly, short answer question has the second highest number of incorrect responses. However, the increasing number of correct responses in each item in comparison to the pre-test shows that the application of pair-work technique in the classroom has become really effective.

### 2.3 Progressive Test- 2

Second progressive test had also been conducted to check the students' progress in developing reading skill after the first progressive test during the teaching period. The following table shows the students' progress in the second test.

**Table No. 7**  
**Item-wise Responses on the Second Progressive Test**

S.N.	Test Items									
	Multiple-Choice		Matching		true/False		Short Answers		Summary Writing	
1. Correct Responses	127	79.35%	126	78.75%	108	67.5%	30	46.85%	11	34.35%
2. Incorrect Responses	33	20.65%	34	21.25%	52	32.5%	34	53.15%	21	65.65%
Total	160	100%	160	100%	160	100%	64	100%	32	100%

The table shows that out of five items, multiple choice item and matching item have the highest number of correct responses i.e. multiple choice item has 127 correct responses and matching item has the second highest number of the correct responses. In percentage, multiple choice item has 79.35% correct responses and matching has 78.75% correct responses. Then, summery writing item has the highest number of incorrect responses i.e. 21 incorrect responses out of 32, which is 65.65% of the total responses.

Observing the above table of distribution of the responses, it can be claimed that the students have achieved satisfactory level of progress. The table shows that the summery writing item and short answer question also have progress in reducing the number of incorrect responses.

### 3.2.4 Post-test

At the end of the classroom teaching, a post-test was conducted. It consisted of the same test item as in the pre-test. It was the final test to determine the students' actual progress in developing reading skill through pair-work technique.

**Table No. 8**  
**Item-wise Responses on the Post-test**

S.N.	Test Items									
	Multiple-Choice		Matching		True/false		Short Answers		Summary Writing	
1. Correct Responses	140	87.5%	128	80%	115	71.85%	37	57.8%	14	43.75%
2. Incorrect Responses	20	12.5%	32	20%	45	28.15%	27	42.2%	18	56.25%
Total	160	100%	160	100%	160	100%	64	100%	32	100%

The above table shows that multiple-choice item has the highest number of correct responses i.e. 87.5% , whereas, matching and true/false item have also 80% and nearly 72% correct responses respectively, which is quite satisfactory. The short answer question has the second lowest number of correct responses, i.e. 37 out of 64 responses, which is 57.8% of the total responses. Summary writing has the lowest number of correct responses, i.e. 14 out of 32 responses, which is 43.75% out of total responses. Therefore, despite all these drawbacks, students of grade 9 could reduce the number of incorrect response, which proves the application of pair-work technique can develop reading skill.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This is the final chapter, which deals with the findings and recommendations of the research work. In order to draw the findings of the research work, the researcher interpreted, analyzed, compared and contrasted the test scores (two progressive tests, pre-test and post-test scores). In addition, item-wise interpretation and analysis of pre-test and post-tests separately have also been done to show the students' progress in reading skill. On the basis of data collected from the primary sources, the researcher found the students more or less having better performance at each item. The findings of the study been given below.

#### **4.1 Findings**

On the basis of the analysis and interpretation of the data the following findings have been extracted:

- i. Out of 576 total responses, 434 (76.79%) were correct in the post-test which was just 51.05% (294) in the pre-test. This shows a remarkable progress in the students' performances.
- ii. The average score in the post-test is 17.32, whereas, average score in the pre-test was 11.53. This shows the remarkable progress of the students in reading skill.
- iii. The average first progressive test score 14.34 compared to the pre-test 11.35 also shows the remarkable progress in the reading skill.
- iv. The students' average score on the second progressive test 15.38 compared to the first progressive test 14.34 out of 25, shows the satisfactory progress in developing reading skill.
- v. The average score of the post-test 17.32 compared to the second progressive average test score 15.38 out of 25 shows that they have continuously progressed satisfactorily.

- vi. Though they have progressed in reading skill, short answer question and summery writing items appeared difficult for the students from the very beginning of the research. It is because, despite their correct understanding of reading text, they committed errors in writing. For instance, sometimes they left punctuation and on the others they missed the subject verb agreement or spelling which cannot be accepted as correct ones.
- vii. Three test items, especially; multiple-choice matching and T/F were responded satisfactorily, which shows 87.5%, 80 and 71.85 results respectively in the post-test. Short answer question and summery writing items show 57.8% and 43.75% result in the post-test, which was just 34.35% and 25% respectively in the pre-test. During the research work it was found that multiple-choice, matching and T/F items can be solved randomly without correct understanding of the reading text or by guessing but it was not applicable for short answer question and summery writing.

## **4.2 Recommendations**

Based on the findings obtained from the analysis of the data some pedagogical implications and recommendations are as follows:

- i. Since the students have shown the continuous progress in their test results i.e. pre-test, progressive tests and post-test, respectively, it can be inferred that the pair-work technique is useful for developing reading skill at secondary level. Therefore, the teachers are strongly advised to apply the pair-work technique to teach reading to develop their reading skill.
- ii. Pair-work technique helps to break the monotonous environment of the classroom because students play the active role and they try to solve the problems themselves. Therefore, all English teachers are advised to apply the pair-work technique for active participation of the students in teaching learning activity.

- iii. If we apply pair-work technique in the language classroom, the students get a chance to work in pair, question answer activity can also be conducted i.e. they can ask questions within and across the pair. So, the pair-work technique will be one of the best techniques to develop students' speaking skill.

This research study is limited to thirty-two students of Jana Jyoti Secondary School, Lamjung. Only 10 seen and 13 unseen texts were used as reading text and these texts were taught through pair-work technique. Therefore, It can not be claimed that findings of the study are applicable to all the schools of Nepal. So, to verify the findings of the study, further studies involving large number of students and schools is desirable.

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